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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



FACTORS AFFECTING SHIPMENT  
OF  
MISSILE SYSTEMS FROM CUBA

1 November 1962

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FACTORS AFFECTING SHIPMENT OF  
MISSILE SYSTEMS FROM CUBA

1. If Moscow has given the order to dismantle and remove Soviet offensive weapons systems from Cuba, the time necessary for final implementation of such an order will be governed by the availability of Soviet ships suitable for return transport of the ballistic missile units. We believe three weeks would be the minimum time required for the proper Soviet ships to reach Cuba and load missile cargoes. It is more likely that at least four weeks would be required to accomplish this.

2. The MRBM/IRBM systems being installed in Cuba involve Soviet equipment which would be valued at between a quarter and a third of a billion dollars in US terms. They also represent a military capability that Moscow would not wish to jeopardize even though the systems were removed from Cuba. Therefore, for both economic and military reasons, this equipment probably would be carefully packed and shipped back to the USSR in a manner designed to prevent damage. The Soviets, therefore, would not willingly carry these missiles on ships which were not able to stow them below deck in the same way they were originally brought to Cuba.

3. At least seven Soviet ships capable of carrying MRBMs/IRBMs have been identified so far among the ships carrying military equipment to Cuba. We do not know the number of missiles carried on each trip by any given ship and cannot be certain when any ship did or did not carry missiles. We believe, however, that each ship could carry about six missiles on transporters, plus the erectors and much of the other associated gear. We have seen 33 MRBMs in Cuba, but so far have not identified any IRBMs. We believe that not less than five and possibly as many as eight voyages by these special Soviet ships were necessary to bring in the number of missiles in Cuba thus far.

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